

79. European ethos. We are familiar with the notion of "national character" as applied to the nations of Europe, but these nations do not have each an ethos. There is a European ethos, for the nations have so influenced each other for the last two thousand years that there is a mixed ethos which includes local variations. The European *kharma* is currently called Christian. In the ancient world Egypt and Sparta were the two cases of groups with the firmest and best-defined ethos. In modern European history the most marked case is that of Venice. In no one of these cases did the elements of moral strength and societal health preponderate, but the history of each showed the great stability produced by a strong ethos. Russia has a more complete and defined ethos than any other state in Europe, although the efforts which have been made since Peter the Great to break down the traditions and limitations of the national ethos, and to adopt the ethos of western Europe, have produced weakness and confusion. It is clear what is the great power of a strong ethos. The ethos of any group deserves close study and criticism. It is an overruling power for good or ill. Modern scholars have made the mistake of attributing to *race* much which belongs to the ethos, with a resulting controversy as to the relative importance of nature and nurture. Others have sought a "soul of the people" and have tried to construct a "collective psychology," repeating for groups processes which are now abandoned for individuals. Historians, groping for the ethos, have tried to write the history of "the people" of such and such a state. The ethos individualizes groups and keeps them apart. Its opposite is cosmopolitanism. It

degenerates into patriotic vanity and chauvinism. Industrialism weakens it, by extending relations of commerce with outside groups. It coincides better with militancy. It has held the Japanese people like a single mailed fist for war. What religion they have has lost all character except that of a cohesive agent to hold the whole close organization tight together.